

Frequently Asked Questions: Deregulation of Cosmetology Instructor and Apprentice Licenses

Q: Which Cosmetology licenses were repealed?

A: The following licenses have been repealed: Instructor (Hairdresser/Cosmetologist, Barber, Manicurist, Esthetician, Electrologist), Apprentice (Barber, Electrologist).

Q: Why were Instructor and Apprentice licenses repealed?

A: Repealing this additional layer of regulation improves flexibility for employers (including instructional institutions) to identify staff that best fit their needs, while removing additional steps for professionals.

Q: Will this be the final change to Cosmetology requirements?

A: Not necessarily. Where necessary, agencies will resolve any remaining issues through regulation. Regulatory changes will be made through the public comment process that provides full opportunity for public comment and review.

For Instructors (Barber, Hairdresser, Manicurist, Esthetician, Electrologist)

Q: Can I still teach in a school of cosmetology?

A: Yes. Repealing the additional state license requirement does not prohibit you from teaching. It simply removes the additional requirement for professionals to hold a state license in teaching.

Q: Does this mean anyone can teach – does this mean that no one will be approving Instructors?

A: No. The Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner will continue to approve all proprietary schools (based in part on an inspection by the Department of Health/Facility Licensing, where applicable) and those who teach at proprietary schools (based on the Postsecondary Commissioner's educational and training and license requirements). Under current requirements, if there is no longer a state instructor's license for barbers, hairdressers, cosmeticians, and manicurists, the Office will require an instructor to hold a license to practice in the specific field of employment (e.g. barber, hairdresser, manicurist) as required by the State of Rhode Island, as well as "a combination of at least five years of education, training, and/or occupational experience in the specific area of teaching."

Q: Can I still practice my profession?

A: Yes, as long as you hold a valid underlying license as a Barber, Hairdresser, Esthetician, Manicurist, or Electrologist. ***The Department of Health has taken automatic steps so that all previous holders of Instructor licenses now hold one of the above underlying license***, which will expire when the Instructor license was set to expire.

For example, if you held a Manicurist Instructor license, you now no longer need an Instructor license to teach, and you now automatically hold a Manicurist license so you can legally practice.

It is however your responsibility to renew this underlying license, just as you would have renewed your Instructor license. The recent letters from the Department of Health include how to renew these converted or reinstated licenses.

Q: Will I need to pay additional fees?

A: No. The \$25 fee you paid for your Instructor license has now been applied to your Manicurist, Barber, Hairdresser, Esthetician or Electrologist license. You must simply renew and pay the fee for this license whenever it expires.

For Barber and Electrologist Apprentices

Q: Do these changes prohibit me from becoming an electrologist in Rhode Island, since there is no longer an apprentice registry?

A: No. The deregulation simply removed the separate requirement to hold an apprentice license.

Q: How do I meet the education and training requirements necessary to become an electrologist?

A: The education and training requirements previously specified (except needing to hold an apprentice license) will continue unchanged until Health revises the regulations specifying professional standards. Regulatory changes will be made through the public comment process that provides full opportunity for public comment and review.

Q: Can I still become a barber apprentice under a licensed barber, and will those hours spent as an apprentice count toward my barber education when I apply for the barber exam and license?

A: You may apprentice under a barber who has been licensed by the State of Rhode Island for at least three (3) years. The barber will be required to keep track of your hours of training so that they are available when you apply to take the barber exam or apply for a barber license.

Q: How long will I have to apprentice under the supervision of a licensed barber?

A: You must work as an apprentice for at least two (2) years before your training will qualify to be considered as part of your education for the barber exam and barber license.

Q: How will the hours be recorded if there is no barber apprentice license?

A: The licensed barber who supervises you will record the hours and provide an affidavit of hours worked when you are eligible to be licensed as a barber.

Q: What will happen if a barber shop is inspected and there are apprentices working on site?

A: The barber apprentice license has been deregulated. The licensed barber will be responsible for supervising and training the apprentices.